

AMENDED IN SENATE SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 20, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009–10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 717

Introduced by Assembly Members Cook and Ma and Lieu

(Principal coauthor: Senator Yee)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members ~~Arambula, Bill Berryhill, Block, Blumenfield, Carter, Coto, Fong, Furutani, Gilmore, Hagman, Huffman, Krekorian, Lieu, Nestande, Portantino, Salas, Saldana, Silva, Torlakson, and Yamada~~ *De Leon, DeVore, Fuller, Gilmore, Harkey, Jeffries, Niello, and Silva*)

(Coauthors: Senators ~~Cedillo and DeSaulnier~~ *Cogdill, Correa, Cox, Denham, and Huff*)

February 26, 2009

~~An act to amend Section 51221.4 of the Education Code, relating to public school instruction.~~ *An act to amend Section 37222 of the Education Code, and to add Section 6715 to the Government Code, relating to state observances.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 717, as amended, Cook. ~~Public school instruction: social science: World War II: Filipinos.~~ *Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.*

Existing law requires the Governor to proclaim various days as holidays and days of remembrance. Existing law also designates certain days in each year as having special significance for purposes of encouraging schools to observe those days and conduct suitable commemorative exercises.

This bill would require the Governor to annually proclaim March 30 of each year as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” The bill would also encourage schools to conduct exercises on March 30 of each year to recognize the contributions of those involved in the Vietnam conflict.

~~Under existing law, the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, is required to include instruction in social science. Schools are authorized to include instruction on World War II and the American role in that war in their social science instruction. Existing law encourages that instruction to include a component drawn from personal testimony of American soldiers who were involved in World War II and those men and women who contributed to the war effort on the homefront. School districts are required to implement the encouraged instruction in a manner that does not result in the imposition of new duties or programs.~~

~~This bill would encourage instruction in social science for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to include instruction on World War II and the role of Filipinos in that war.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 *SECTION 1. The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of*
- 2 *the following:*
- 3 *(a) In 2007, the United States Congress, by separate Senate and*
- 4 *House Resolutions, declared that a Welcome Home Vietnam*
- 5 *Veterans Day should be established.*
- 6 *(b) The Vietnam War was fought in Vietnam from 1961 to 1975,*
- 7 *and involved North Vietnam and Viet Cong in conflict with the*
- 8 *United States and South Vietnam.*
- 9 *(c) The United States became involved in Vietnam because*
- 10 *policymakers in the United States believed that if South Vietnam*
- 11 *fell to a communist government, communism would spread*
- 12 *throughout the rest of southeast Asia.*
- 13 *(d) Members of the United States Armed Forces began serving*
- 14 *in an advisory role to the South Vietnamese in 1961.*
- 15 *(e) As a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents on August 2 and*
- 16 *August 4, 1964, the United States overwhelmingly passed the Gulf*
- 17 *of Tonkin Resolution (Public Law 99-408), on August 7, 1964,*

1 *which effectively handed over the war-making powers to President*
2 *Johnson until such time as “peace and security” had returned to*
3 *Vietnam.*

4 *(f) In 1965, there were 80,000 United States troops in Vietnam,*
5 *and by 1969 a peak of approximately 543,000 troops was reached.*

6 *(g) On January 27, 1973, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which*
7 *required the release of all United States prisoners of war held in*
8 *North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all United States Armed*
9 *Forces from South Vietnam.*

10 *(h) On March 30, 1973, the United States Armed Forces*
11 *completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam.*

12 *(i) More than 58,000 members of the United States Armed*
13 *Forces lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000 were*
14 *wounded.*

15 *(j) In 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in*
16 *the District of Columbia to commemorate those members of the*
17 *United States Armed Forces who died or were declared missing*
18 *in action in Vietnam.*

19 *(k) The Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue among*
20 *the people of the United States.*

21 *(l) Upon their return home, members of the United States Armed*
22 *Forces who served bravely and faithfully for the United States*
23 *during the Vietnam War were caught in the crossfire of public*
24 *debate about the involvement of the United States in the war.*

25 *(m) The establishment of a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans*
26 *Day would be an appropriate way to honor those members of the*
27 *United States Armed Forces who served in Vietnam during the*
28 *Vietnam War.*

29 *SEC. 2. Section 37222 of the Education Code is amended to*
30 *read:*

31 *37222. (a) The following days in each year are designated and*
32 *set apart as days having special significance:*

33 *(1) The second Wednesday in May as the Day of the Teacher.*

34 *(2) April 21 of each year as John Muir Day.*

35 *(3) April 6 of each year as California Poppy Day.*

36 *(4) March 30 of each year as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans*
37 *Day.*

38 *(b) On each of the days designated in subdivision (a), all public*
39 *schools and educational institutions are encouraged to observe*

1 those days and to conduct suitable commemorative exercises as
2 follows:

3 (1) On the Day of the Teacher, exercises commemorating and
4 directing attention to teachers and the teaching profession.

5 (2) On John Muir Day, exercises stressing the importance that
6 an ecologically sound natural environment plays in the quality of
7 life for all of us, and emphasizing John Muir's significant
8 contributions to the fostering of that awareness and the indelible
9 mark he left on the State of California.

10 (3) On California Poppy Day, exercises honoring the California
11 Poppy, including instruction about native plants, particularly the
12 California Poppy, and the economic and aesthetic value of
13 wildflowers; promoting responsible behavior toward our natural
14 resources and a spirit of protection toward them; and emphasizing
15 the value of natural resources and conservation of natural resources.

16 (4) *On Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, exercises*
17 *recognizing the contributions of all those involved in the Vietnam*
18 *War and remembering the sacrifices they made for their country.*

19 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature that the exercises
20 encouraged in this section be integrated into the regular school
21 program, and be conducted by the school or institution within the
22 amount otherwise budgeted for educational programs.

23 *SEC. 3. Section 6715 is added to the Government Code, to*
24 *read:*

25 *6715. The Governor shall annually proclaim March 30 as*
26 *Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.*

27 ~~SECTION 1. Section 51221.4 of the Education Code is~~
28 ~~amended to read:~~

29 ~~51221.4. (a) The Legislature encourages instruction in the area~~
30 ~~of social science, as required pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section~~
31 ~~51220, to include instruction on the Vietnam War including the~~
32 ~~"Secret War" in Laos and the role of Southeast Asians in that war.~~
33 ~~The Legislature encourages this instruction to include, but not be~~
34 ~~limited to, a component drawn from personal testimony, especially~~
35 ~~in the form of oral or video histories of Southeast Asians who were~~
36 ~~involved in the Vietnam War and those men and women who~~
37 ~~contributed to the war effort on the homefront. The oral histories~~
38 ~~used as a part of the instruction regarding the role of Southeast~~
39 ~~Asians in the Vietnam War and the "Secret War" in Laos shall~~
40 ~~exemplify the personal sacrifice and courage of the wide range of~~

1 ordinary citizens who were called upon to participate and provide
2 intelligence for the United States. The oral histories shall contain
3 the views and comments of their subjects regarding the reasons
4 for their participation in the war. These oral histories also shall
5 solicit comments from their subjects regarding the aftermath of
6 the war and the immigration of Southeast Asians to the United
7 States.

8 (b) (1) The Legislature encourages the instruction required
9 pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 51220 to include instruction
10 on World War II and the role of Filipinos in that war consisting
11 of an accurate history of the contributions of the Filipino American
12 veterans who fought courageously in the United States Army for
13 freedom and democracy in World War II, under the leadership of
14 General Douglas MacArthur.

15 (2) The Legislature further encourages the instruction described
16 in paragraph (1) to include a component drawn from personal
17 testimony, especially in the form of oral or video histories of
18 Filipinos who were involved in World War II and those men and
19 women who contributed to the war effort on the homefront. The
20 oral histories used as a part of the instruction regarding the role of
21 Filipinos in World War II are encouraged to do all of the following:

22 (A) Exemplify the personal sacrifice and courage of the wide
23 range of ordinary citizens who were called upon to participate and
24 to provide intelligence for the United States.

25 (B) Contain the views and comments of their subjects regarding
26 the reasons for their participation in the war.

27 (C) Solicit comments from their subjects regarding the aftermath
28 of the war and the immigration of Filipinos to the United States.

29 (e) This section shall be carried out in a manner that does not
30 result in the imposition of new duties or programs on the school
31 district. In that regard, the Legislature finds and declares that this
32 section does not mandate costs to local agencies or school districts
33 and that materials used to comply with this section shall be part
34 of normal curriculum materials purchased by school districts in
35 their normal course of business and purchasing cycles.